

AFTER their F. A. Cup glory the previous week, Wycombe Wanderers came down to earth with a severe jolt on Saturday, when suffering their heaviest Isthmian League defeat for more than ten years.

Dagenham, the F. A. Trophy champions, took full advantage of a series of defensive errors to storm to their biggest victory over the Blues.

The goal rush took Dagenham's tally against Wycombe this season to nine in two games. The previous match at Loakes Park ended in a 4-4 draw. This time, although they dictated much of the play, Wycombe could not reply.

Clearly the midweek victory over Worcester had taken its toll both physically and mentally. Most of their players lacked their usual sharpness and speed, and against such a talented side as Dagenham that was fatal.

The match was a particularly unhappy one for goal-

Dagenham 5, Wycombe 0
by MICHAEL KNOX

Biggest loss for 10 years

keeper Gary Lester, whose acrobatic feats this season have earned the side some valuable points.

On this day, he scarcely did a thing right and must take the blame for two of the goals. Every player is entitled to an off-day, Lester will be hoping that this was his only one of the season.

Disastrous

Dagenham are never the easiest opponents to play away from home, and on this day were particularly sharp in front of goal, converting five chances out of eight.

Yet, a day that ended disastrously, began well for Wycombe, who could quite

easily have been two goals clear in the first ten minutes.

Only a brilliant diving save to his left by home goalkeeper Paul Cotter prevented Terry Glynn scoring with a fine left foot shot on the turn and then Ken Wilson, preferred in the side to Tony Price, blasted over from a narrow angle.

The turning point of the whole match came in the 15th minute following a crucial error by Lester, who hesitated before coming out to meet Chris Ballard's through pass down the middle.

If he had come out at once, he would have gathered the ball. But instead

Ricky Kidd ran on to the pass and lobbed it over Lester, who was caught in no man's land.

This goal did not prevent Wycombe coming forward, but they were becoming susceptible to quick breaks, especially by the elusive Steve Jones, son of the former Spurs and Wales star Cliff Jones.

Low shot

It was a fine run and cross by Jones that led to Dagenham's second goal in the 23rd minute. The defence cleared the ball only as far as the edge of the penalty area, from where Martin Binks drove a low shot inside the left post.

Apart from one diving save by Lester, which prevented a goal by Scales, the rest of the first half belonged to Wycombe. But they could not score, even after one amazing scramble in front of the Dagenham goal.

One sensed at half-time that this was not to be their day and two goals in a minute soon after the interval confirmed the impression.

Both came from the head of Kidd, who thus completed a hat-trick. The first followed a cross by Ballard from the right. Lester came out to punch clear but Kidd got there first and headed home from the edge of the penalty area.

Then straight from the kick-off they made it 4-0. This time Binks broke down the left past feeble defensive cover and centred low into the goalmouth, where the unmarked Kidd stooped to head low past Lester.

Corners

Wycombe immediately brought on Steve Long for the disappointing Mick Hollifield and continued to have their fair share of the play. The corner tally of seven apiece indicates that the visitors were by no means overrun.

But it was Dagenham who scored again near the end when George Duck eluded an off-side trap and rounded Lester to score.

This was Wycombe's fourth successive away league defeat, and they may have to reconsider their bold attacking policy — all the Dagenham goals resulted from quick breaks.

Dagenham: P. Cotter; M. Wright, T. Scales, D. Moore, K. Elley, T. Horan, C. Ballard, R. Kidd, G. Duck, M. Binks, S. Jones. Sub: C. Maycock (not used).

Wycombe: G. Lester; P. Birdseye, G. Borg, R. Davies, S. Hardwick, R. Dell, M. Hollifield (sub: S. Long 64 mins), G. Toll, T. Glynn, J. Jacobs, K. Wilson.

Referee: E. Griffith (London).
Half-time 2-0. Scorers — Dagenham: Kidd 3 (15 mins, 59, 60), Binks (23), Duck (90).

Price to return against Hitchin

WYCOMBE manager Mike Keen is set to make changes following his side's heavy defeat at Dagenham on Saturday, for tonight's Berger Isthmian League match at home to Hitchin Town.

Mick Hollifield, substituted

after a disappointing performance, and winger Ken Wilson seem likely to make way for Steve Long and Tony Price.

Wilson sent over some fine crosses on Saturday but is more predictable than Price, whose ability to do something different can baffle defences.

Hitchin should not be taken lightly after two fine results during the past week. Last Tuesday they stunned the non-league football world with a 5-2 win at Enfield and then on Saturday beat Billericay 3-0 in the second round of the F. A. Trophy.

All season ticket holders must claim their seats for the Bournemouth F.A. Cup tie on November 22, before 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday. Otherwise they will go on sale to the public at prices either £1.30 or £1.50.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	20	10	8	2	43	23	38
Dagenham	22	10	7	5	46	31	37
Bromley	18	9	5	4	35	24	34
Slough	16	9	6	1	24	11	33
Sutton	17	8	6	3	34	27	30
Dulwich	18	7	7	4	30	25	28
Wycombe	19	7	6	6	29	26	27
Harrow	20	7	5	8	27	25	26
Leytonstone	16	7	3	6	33	30	24
Walthamstow	17	7	3	7	19	27	24
*Barking	21	7	5	9	29	39	23
Staines	18	6	4	8	21	22	22
Tooting	19	6	4	9	23	29	22
Carshalton	17	7	1	9	25	33	22
Woking	19	6	3	10	22	33	21
Hitchin	15	5	5	5	22	16	20
Hayes	15	5	4	6	12	17	19
Harlow	17	4	6	7	23	29	18
Hendon	17	4	5	8	21	25	17
Boreham Wood	16	3	7	6	19	31	16
Croydon	16	2	9	5	13	16	15
Leatherhead	21	2	9	10	15	26	15

* 2 points deducted.